



THE BUFFALO BILL STORIES

A WEEKLY PUBLICATION
DEVOTED TO BORDER HISTORY

Issued Weekly. By Subscription \$2.50 per year. Entered as Second Class Matter at New York Post Office by STREET & SMITH, 238 William St., N. Y.

No. 65.

Price, Five Cents.

BUFFALO BILL'S RUN-DOWN

OR
THE RED HAND RENEGADE'S DEATH



"THAT IS THE END OF THE CHIEF OF THE RED RIDERS!" CRIED BUFFALO BILL, AS OVER THE CLIFF WITH A CRASH WENT HORSE AND RIDER.



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BUFFALO BILL'S RUN-DOWN;

OR,

The Red Hand Renegade's Death.

By the author of "BUFFALO BILL."

CHAPTER I.

THE MYSTERIOUS SERGEANT.

"There's Buffalo Bill now, miss, the very man I spoke of, and with him on the trail now, I do not fear road-agents."

The speaker was Jack Jessop, the driver of the coach running between Pioneer City, a mining camp and settlement, and Fort Advance, a military post near which was the miners' camp and a few settlers' cabins.

It was a most dangerous run that Jack Jessop had, not only on account of the hard trail to drive, but because it bordered the Indian country, and more, had been haunted for a long time by a band of road-agents known as "Red Hand Riders" and "Birds of Prey."

But Jack Jessop was a daring fellow, an expert driver, had faced death many times, and mounted his box each week for his run with no sign of dread but that he would get through all right.

On this run, when he is presented to the reader's notice, Jack had his misgivings, for on the box with him was a beautiful young girl, the daughter of a sergeant of Fort Advance, who was going to make her home at the fort.

Though only a sergeant's daughter, Jack had found that she was an heiress, and had lots of baggage along, wore jewels of value, and she had hinted that she was well supplied with money.

In addition to this fair passenger, who rode with him on the box, Jack Jessop had three passengers inside the coach, a young officer, who had told him he

had a large sum of money with him belonging to the Government, and two speculators who were also well supplied with gold for purchases they might make in the mining settlement.

It was on account of carrying such passengers that Jessop was nervous over his run, but he hid his dread from his lady companion on the box, and had entertained her as he drove along with stories of the frontier and spoke of several men who had become famous there from their many daring deeds.

The young girl had been intensely interested in all that he told her, and had been lost in admiration at his splendid driving, seeing him go along places where only the coolest nerve and greatest skill saved them from destruction.

"I tell you, miss, this be a strange country, and a strange people live in it," went on Jack, delighted at having so good a listener.

"Now, thar's ther Injuns. They is queer folks, and trained to kill, and does kill, whenever they gets the chance.

"Ther soldiers is out here also to kill and get kilt, and in the settlements and mining camps somebody nightly turns up the'r toes under a bullet, or a knife."

"And yet you like it here?"

"Like it, miss? I love it, for we gets the fresh air, the beautiful scenery, the fine drives along the trail and has the pleasure of risking life and danger each day. Now take Buffalo Bill, for instance."

"Buffalo Bill—yes, I have heard of him as a great scout."

"The greatest of 'em all, miss, is Bill.

"He were born and bred in ther Wild West, and he'll die here, too, I guess. He was reared to a life of danger and death, of hardships and struggles from a boy, and he's made his name famous as an Indian fighter, a scout, guide and all-round game fellow. It's only such a country as this could turn out such a man."

"Where is he now?"

"At Fort Advance, miss, where he's chief of scouts, for he has under him about two dozen jist

such fellers as he himself, and he makes a record for them 'most every day.

"Your pa knows him, miss, and they is good pards.

"Now there's your pa, miss."

"And what about him?" asked Lucille Fallon, with a smile.

"He saved the life of a soldier one day at the risk of his own; then again, he saved Colonel Carr's life, and was made corporal, then sergeant, and is now fort ordnance sergeant, with a strong chance of a commission."

"When you sees Buffalo Bill, miss, yer'll see a man yer'll never forgit," continued the driver.

"Is he at the fort now?"

"Maybe he is, and maybe he isn't, miss, for he's more oftener away on the trail looking up danger from Indians and the road-agents, for the latter has lately cut a warning of death to him in the monument erected on Monument Hill, the spot where Six-horse Sam, my pard, lost his life, along with others who was passengers."

"What kind of an accident was it?"

"It wasn't no accident, miss, but sheer deviltry, for the road-agents—the Red Hand Riders we calls 'em—jist kilt poor Sam and others.

"Now they has put out a warning ag'in Buffalo Bill, that they will kill him if he don't leave this country."

"And will he leave?"

"Lordy, miss, you don't know Buffalo Bill, or you'd never ask that!

"Why, he'll stay right here, if death is sartin; but he's got no idea of dying, and we all think he has a charmed life, don't you see?"

"And these outlaws, the Red Hand Riders, you called them, infest this trail?"

"Yes, miss, first my run, then another trail on the south branch, again striking the one going north out of Pioneer City, and sometimes hitting the main line which you come along."

"And they cannot be run down?"

"Well, they hain't been yet, for you see they is friendly with the Injuns, they has spies in the fort

and settlements, and so get posted when a force is to move against them and retreat to the redskin country or disperse.

"Who they is nobody knows, for they goes masked, and they is called by birds' names, their captain being known as Captain Eagle."

"A strange lot of men, indeed, and I hope we will not meet them."

"So does I, miss, for your sake; but, yonder is Monument Hill, miss, and—there's Buffalo Bill now—the very man I spoke of; and with him on the trail I do not fear road-agents," and Jack Jessop pointed ahead to where a horseman was visible near a white wooden cross erected as a monument on the trail.

It was the monument erected to the memory of Six-horse Sam, who had been killed there, and upon which had been cut the warning, or "death knell," to Buffalo Bill, the scout, who now showed his disregard of it by calmly waiting there on the fatal spot for the coach to come up.

Looking fixedly at him as she approached, Lucille Fallon saw a man who was, indeed, one to never forget.

Tall, splendidly formed, a superb rider, a face that was full of manly beauty, strong and fearless, and about him a manner of calm repose, he looked the hero she had been told that he was, while, reining back his horse as the coach came to a halt, he raised his broad sombrero with a courtly grace that was very winning, and bent low at the introduction given him by Jack Jessop to the sergeant's daughter.

"Well, miss, what does yer think of Buffalo Bill?"

So asked Jack Jessop as the coach rolled on its way once more toward the fort, after a short talk held with Buffalo Bill, the scout, at Monument Hill.

Lucille Fallon did not at first reply. She seemed to be thinking of the man she had just met.

Then she answered:

"Think of him? Why, I think he is the finest specimen of manhood I ever beheld. He looks the hero that he is, and were I in trouble, he is just the man I would go to, or seek help of."

"You've got him down fine, miss, and let me tell

you now that I feel better since we has met him on ther trail.

"Yer see, ther Red Hand Riders is a bad lot o' outlaws, wicked, merciless and daring, and they has spies, I is sart'in, who in some way gets them word when the stages is coming through with booty, or anybody worth holding up.

"Now your comin' has been known, and it's about pay time at the fort, and Lieutenant Leslie, an officer who is comin', is expected to have Government money with him, while I heard the two men inside, strangers to me, was going to the mines to look up speculations, so they must have money along.

"You has got the dust, and plenty of baggage, and I tell you it would be bad to see the Red Riders on this run."

"But you feel no anxiety now that you have seen Buffalo Bill?"

"I don't exactly say that, miss, for there's danger clean up in sight of the fort, where we is due at sunset, though I'm pushing to get in ahead of time so you can have daylight to welcome you."

"You are very kind, Mr. Jessop."

"Don't mister me, please, miss, for I is plain Jack, or Jessop, as you please, called by my pards Champion Driver of the Overland," and Jack Jessop added the last with pardonable pride, while Lucille Fallon remarked:

"From what I have seen, you deserve the title, and I was told a long way back that the worst piece of road I would have to go over I would find that Jack Jessop, the Ribbon Sharp, would be the driver, so I would have nothing to fear."

Jack seemed hardly to hear the complimentary words, for his eyes were scouring the horizon, where waves of inky clouds were rising and obscuring the skies.

"I fear we is going to have a storm, miss, and a bad one, and it is not what I care to meet on this trail, as there are cliffs to go round, canyons to pass through, and heavy timber along the trail, not to speak of streams that rise like lightning into torrents.

"I'll force 'em along a little more," and as Jack

Jessop called to his horses to quicken their pace, there suddenly burst out of the black clouds a livid flame, followed by a deafening crash of thunder.

"This is grand," cried Lucille Fallon, unmindful of the danger, and she smiled as she saw the heads suddenly thrust out of the coach windows, for the passengers inside had had no sight of the rising storm.

The coach rolled rapidly on, the eyes of the driver upon his team and the gathering tempest, which he saw was increasing in fury as it rose.

"We is going to have the worst storm I ever seen in these parts," he muttered, as he still urged his horses on.

"I'm anxious to get over Canyon River Bridge afore it breaks, for that be a dangerous place to cross even in good weather; but beyond is an old camp we kin strike for if the storm gets very bad, as we cannot cross some of the streams, I fear; but you bet, miss, I'll push on, if there's a chance to get you there."

"The storm I glory in, for I never saw anything more magnificent, and I only hope it will keep the Red Riders off."

"I hope so, miss; but I seen Buffalo Bill was a trifle anxious about you, and so is I, for them Red Riders is devils."

Along the trail swung the coach, the six horses going at a pace that few men would have dared force them over such a perilous trail.

But Jack Jessop was showing his just claim to being called the "Ribbon Sharp of the Overland," and he pushed along with nerve and skill that won Lucille Fallon's admiration, dividing it with the grandeur of the rising tempest.

At length they came to a long, winding descent down a canyon, to the Canyon River below, the river dashing along through cliff-like banks that rose hundreds of feet above the water, which surged swiftly along through its narrow chasm.

"There's the bridge, miss," said Jack Jessop, and as he uttered the words, a party of horsemen rode out into the trail ahead of him, causing him to cry out:

"The Red Hand Riders have got us!"

The bridge, a narrow structure of long timber stretchers and split logs, was but a few hundred yards away; but the horsemen had ridden into the trail between the coach and it.

There was a pine thicket on each side of the trail, the canyon towering overhead, and from the shadows had come the outlaws.

There were about a dozen of them, two standing like sentinels in the trail, four riding on each side up to the coach, and one man who appeared to be the chief seated upon his horse and waiting.

Not a word was spoken, the outlaws had just shown themselves, formed for work, and the eight went at a canter until they passed the coach, where they wheeled and halted on each side like an escort.

Jack Jessop seemed to know their way of procedure, for he drove on until his leaders were up to the chief and then he halted, but called out:

"I'd like ter run yer down, but I dasn't, yer Imp of Hades."

Lucille was surprised and alarmed at the bold words of the driver, and gazed at the outlaws, they having now supplanted the storm in her mind.

She saw that all were mounted upon blood-bay horses, that they wore a kind of uniform, were masked, and their hands were covered with buckskin gloves dyed to a carmine hue.

Whether white, redskin or negro she could not tell, for nothing could be seen to testify, so shielded were they by their masks.

"Well, Jack, you thought you would get through this time, but here we are," said the chief.

"Does yer think I'm blind that I don't see yer?" growled the driver.

"Neither deaf, dumb nor blind, Jack, are you, so answer questions, for that storm is not far away."

"What does yer want?"

"Who have you along?"

"This young miss, ther daughter of a sergeant at ther fort, a young officer and two gents I don't know."

"Any money?"

"No! yer won't git nothin'."

"Jack, you are not as well informed as I am, for though that young lady is a sergeant's daughter, yes, the daughter of one who has been hot on my trail more than once, she is an heiress in her own right, and has plenty of money, along with jewels, too, and lots of valuable baggage."

"Yer pertends ter know it all."

"I don't pretend, Jack, but know, as I will show you."

"Waal?"

"The lieutenant inside is sent out as Colonel Carr's aide, but he is really paymaster, and has his boodle along and plenty of it."

"You is way off."

"I will also tell you that the two other passengers are gold sharks, men looking for paying mines, and with the money to buy them at low prices from poor miners. I am posted, you see, and as all four of your passengers not only have money, but are valuable to ransom, I shall capture the outfit and hold them for future payments."

"I say, Lieutenant Leslie kin drive a team well, so let me stay as hostage, and he take the coach on to the fort and state your terms."

"No, Jack, you are not valuable enough as a hostage; but I shall keep you also, for the coach company have got to pay to get you back also, as this is my star hold-up, my champion haul, and should get me a fortune, and I need it, for Buffalo Bill has vowed to run the Red Riders off the trail, I hear, and I'm a little afraid of him, I admit."

"I'll bet you ten to one Buffalo Bill hangs you yet, payable the day you is strung up," savagely said Jack Jessop.

"What good would the money do me if I won, and was hung through the agency of some other scout?" laughed the outlaw chief.

"Give you a good funeral."

"My executioners will see to that; but come, no man can hold the reins as you can, and I'm going to play a deep game with the aid of this team, so you are to drive."

"Where?"

"Down the river valley through the night, for the storm will destroy the trail."

"I'll not drive an inch."

"Then one of my men shall, and that may mean an upset and death to the young lady."

"I'll drive."

"You are wise; but I'll put the gentlemen in irons first, have the young lady enter the coach and disarm you."

"I will still ride on the box," said Lucille, firmly.

"But you will be drenched, Miss Fallon, and——"

"I have rubber wraps, and can keep perfectly dry. I will not ride inside the coach," was the determined reply of the young girl.

"As you please, if you are willing to take the consequences," was the reply of the road-agent chief.

There was every indication that the storm would break before very long, and the outlaws were preparing for it by getting their stormcoats ready.

The chief called to three of his men, who, dismounting, disarmed the driver of the coach, and got roundly cursed for doing so, though of course Jack Jessop dared not offer resistance.

Then they called to the passengers to get out and they, too, were disarmed and then their ankles manacled together, while the inside of the coach was thoroughly searched.

Lucille Fallon, having put on her rubber coat and a slouch hat she took from her satchel, Jack Jessop arranged the leather aprons and blankets about her, and then said, in his brusque way:

"Well, cutthroat chief, I'm ready, for there is no need of staying here."

"And I am ready, but there is work for some of you men to do; after a while you can follow, for that storm will destroy all trails and I shall play a cunning game now, Jack Jessop, which will throw even your famous chief of scouts, Buffalo Bill, off the trail."

"You've got to make it clever to do that; but I'm betting big money you can't blind no trail so Buffalo Bill can't follow it."

"Can I not?"

"We shall see," and with a confident tone he called out:

"Sparrow, take six men with you, get axes from the pack-horses, and go and destroy the bridge across Canyon River.

"Cut it away as though the storm had caused it to go down, see?"

"Yes, Captain Eagle," answered the man addressed as Sparrow.

"Make a clever job of it, and then follow on the trail down the river, and hold on until you get to camp, for I shall keep on until after midnight, so as to be far away in the morning where my trail will not be seen."

"And you mean that those at the fort shall believe that the coach, and all with it, went down with the bridge, does yer, Cap'n Eagle?"

"I do, Jack Jessop."

"Waal, you is about ther worst piece o' humanity I ever come across."

"Thanks, Jack. What do you think now of your friend, Buffalo Bill, following our trail?"

"He'll follow it if it leads to Perdition, mark my words," was the energetic response of the Overland driver, and with a mocking laugh the chief ordered two of his men to get their lanterns from the pack-horses and have them ready to light when night came on.

Soon all was in readiness for the start, seven of the band having gone to the bridge to destroy it, and the others riding to the rear of the coach, the chief taking the lead.

"Follow me, Jack, and remember, this must be the drive of your life, for you'll have a new trail to go over, and darkness that can be felt, not to speak of that storm, which threatens to be about as bad as any I ever saw in these mountains."

With this the chief rode on, and after casting a longing look toward the river, and another back up the trail he had come, as though hoping for aid, Jack Jessop gathered up his reins and followed the outlaw leader.

The horses did not seem to at first relish this turning off the trail they knew so well, but Jack used his whip and soon had them well at work.

It was growing late now, for the sun was nearing the horizon, and but for the hold-up the coach would have been near the fort.

The whole skies were overcast now with black clouds, the lightning was vivid and blinding, the thunder terrific, and far off on the mountain tops the trees could be seen swaying wildly under the force of the hurricane, for it was nothing less.

The storm was breaking, and before long would sweep down the valley with irresistible force.

The scene was a grand one, though appalling, as the Red Hand Riders began their flight through the storm.

Jack Jessop looked at his companion, as she sat by his side.

She was pale, but perfectly calm.

"You has got nerve enough for a man, miss, and no mistake," he muttered.

"That storm is appalling, and our situation but adds to the terror; but I have confidence in you, and do not believe those outlaws will really harm us," was the answer.

"Do you not think you had better come into the coach, Miss Fallon?" called out Lieutenant Leslie; but, thanking him, the brave girl replied:

"No, I shall be just as safe here, and I am too well wrapped up to get wet."

In a short while the storm was upon them, and with a fury and power that startled the horses and caused the coach to sway wildly under the force of the wind.

But Jack Jessop urged them on, and followed the leader steadily.

Then the rain fell in sheets of water, but fortunately, at their backs, and small rivers of water flowed about them.

Darkness soon followed, two of the outlaws rode to the front with lanterns, and through the blackness and storm the flight was continued, in spite of the desperate danger.

CHAPTER II.

THE ISLAND RETREAT.

Gazing upon an island in the center of a broad, swift-flowing and shallow river, no one would have believed that within its towering cliff banks of rocks was a garden of beauty.

The island was a hundred acres in size, and in the upper cliffs began a canyon, widening into a valley that was fertile, dotted with trees and through which wound a tiny stream fed by springs.

In the canyon stood a large cabin, of heavy logs, with a rock chimney, and further back a smaller one.

Horses and cattle dotted the valley, a few sheep were there also, and a garden spot where grew various vegetables was walled in against the cliffs.

It was an ideal border home, with its rude, broad piazza, its comfortable surroundings and quiet repose.

To reach this island home one had to ford the river at two places, for it had to be crossed to one bank which was bold and precipitous, along which the trail lay, and from that shore at a certain point to where there was a split in the rocky bank through which one passed up into the little cliff-guarded valley.

Seated upon the piazza of the cabin was a woman, reading a book, while working in the garden was a negro man who had passed his half a century of years.

A negress of nearly his age was bustling in and out of the cabin, engaged in preparing the evening meal, and the picture was one of peace and contentment, apparently.

The smoke curled upward from the chimney, the horses and cattle grazing quietly about the valley; saddles, among them a side-saddle, with bridles and lariats, hung under the roof of the piazza, with a rifle on pegs and a belt of arms near it.

There was a bench and a couple of rustic easy-chairs on the piazza, and in one of them sat the woman.

She was young, scarcely over twenty-five, and her buckskin dress revealed a perfect form.

Her face was very beautiful, darkly bronzed by exposure, yet it wore a look of sadness, but was intelligent, refined and with a certain look of daring and determination upon it which had been stamped there doubtless by the wild life of freedom and danger which she could not but lead in that far-away home.

Within the cabin there was an evidence of comfort one would not expect to find in that remote retreat, while there were shelves of books, a guitar, pencil sketches and paintings, evidence of refined tastes and accomplishments in the fair dweller in the little home.

"Oh! will this life ever end?" suddenly said the woman, dropping the book in her lap and proving by her words that her mind was not upon what she had been reading.

"With Loyd Lamar all that I once believed him, I could be happy in the wilderness.

"But some day the end will come, for he cannot live the life he does and not sooner or later meet his fate for defying, as he does, the laws of God and man—oh! there he comes now, and—as I live, he is not alone.

"What does that mean, for he never allows any of his men to know of this retreat?"

As she mused, the woman's eyes, bent down the valley, had fallen upon a horseman who had emerged from the split in the rock, or cliff, that formed the wall of the island, and through which was the only means of ingress and egress to the valley.

The horseman was not alone, however, for behind him came another rider, and following were half a dozen pack animals heavily laden.

"It is a woman, not a man!

"What does it mean?

"Ah! what can it mean other than that he has made some poor, unfortunate woman suffer through his lawless acts.

"And he has brought her here?

"Well, I am glad at least that he has done so."

The woman continued to gaze upon the horseman

and his companion, at the same time calling to the negro man to come to her.

As the negro approached, she said:

"Here is the chief, Uncle Toby, and he is not alone."

"So I sees, missy; but it am a leddy with him, and she do look like a mighty pretty young girl."

"Alas, yes," and just then the horseman drew rein, leaped from his saddle and called out:

"Here, Mildred, I have brought company for you, a young lady who is to be your captive guest until I can collect the liberal ransom I shall demand for her release."

CHAPTER III.

THE OUTLAW'S VOW.

Several weeks after the arrival of the horseman in the island, accompanied by a fair guest, a man rode along a ridge toward the base of a lofty spur that broke off suddenly, with a drop of hundreds of feet, in the higher summits of a range of mountains.

He had climbed slowly up a steep and zig-zag trail to the ridge, glancing back now and then at the view spread out before him of wildest grandeur and desolation, for within the scope of the vision there was not visible a single house, no curling smoke from a fireside, no cattle dotting the valleys and plains.

All was solitude, vast and wild.

Reaching the summit of the ridge, along the trail that led up from the river flowing at the base of the hills, he followed it toward the cliff.

But suddenly he halted, just as he came in sight of a number of cabins nestling away under the cliff.

There was no sign of life about them and something caught his eyes that caused him to cry out:

"My God! what does this mean?"

"Some one has been here, or they have deserted me!"

He put spurs to his horse and dashed forward, but stopped almost as suddenly and said:

"Am I mad?"

"There may be a trap set for me there?"

Dismounting, he left his horse standing unhitched and with a rifle unslung from his saddle, he moved cautiously forward, making a flank movement from rock to rock upon the cabins.

He was a man of commanding presence, wearing military boots, a slouch hat encircled by a gold cord, a military fatigue suit, and a belt of arms.

But strangest of all, he was masked and wore red gauntlet gloves.

The man was the same who had held up Jack Jessop's stage-coach weeks before, the leader of the Red Hand Riders of the Rockies.

From rock to rock, tree to tree he made his way toward the cabins, and as he advanced he saw continued evidence that the place seemed deserted and that some one had been there since his departure.

"What can it mean?" he muttered.

Then he answered his own question:

"Why, what can it mean other than that Buffalo Bill has tracked me here and ended all.

"It is lucky for me that I was not here, for, from the appearance of things, the band has been entirely wiped out, and I would have shared the same fate had I not been at my other retreat on the isle."

With this he moved on once more, and with the greatest caution, for he was looking for a trap.

At length he came near two cabins that stood in the entrance of a small canyon penetrating the overhanging cliff or spur.

Back in the canyon was another cabin, and these three comprised the living-quarters of the Red Hand Riders in their retreat in the mountains a hundred miles from Fort Advance.

There was a wall of rock around the mouth of the canyon, which had been thrown up to serve as a breastwork from behind which to resist attack and also as a barrier for a cattle corral, for there were bars in one side of it next to the cliff.

The cabins were large, roughly built, and had a roof shelter around them to sit under in bad weather.

In the canyon, close to the cliff, were a number of newly made graves, and seeing that the cabins were utterly deserted and that they had been robbed of

their contents, the outlaw chief walked over to the mounds that marked the last resting-place of about a dozen dead.

There were two groups of graves, apart from each other, and upon the rocks over the large number was painted:

HERE LIES BURIED,

Seven men, names unknown, but members of the outlaw band of

RED HAND RIDERS

Slain by United States Cavalry, under command of Lieutenant Walter Worth, and tracked down by Buffalo Bill, Scout and Guide.

The other group of graves were three in number, and painted by the same hand on the rocks were the names of two soldiers and a scout who had fallen in the attack upon the outlaw retreat.

"Well! this means that my band has been wiped out, that I am a chief without a following, and I owe it to Buffalo Bill, the man whom I warned to leave this part of the country or he should die by the hands of the Red Hands.

"Jack Jessop has won his bet, in that Buffalo Bill has tracked them here."

After walking over the camp, and seeing that the victors had made a clean sweep of it, the outlaw chief mounted his horse and rode rapidly over the miles that intervened between the retreat and the island.

He arrived at night, and loud and bitter were his words when he found that the scout had unearthed his secret island retreat also.

Climbing up to the cliff top, he built a signal-fire, and savagely muttered the words:

"Yes, my signal will call Chief Iron Eyes to my aid, and I will start at once on the trail of the despoilers, for they are not far away, and cannot travel fast, hampered as they are."

From the top of the tallest cliff overhanging the river valley, in which was the rock-bound island where dwelt a mysterious woman, whose life held some strange, cruel secret, there flamed up a fire which could be seen far away.

The outlaw chief had ridden as far up the steep

ascent as his horse could go, and then on foot he had climbed on up to the top.

All was darkness and desolation as he glanced around him over the many miles of mountain, valley and plain.

Dark and deserted was the island which had been his secret retreat, or rather where Mildred, the mysterious woman, had dwelt.

The summit of the cliff was covered with a few trees, pines, and several of these were dead and dry.

At the base of one of these dead trees was a pile of wood placed there evidently for the purpose it was then to be used for.

Lighting a match, the outlaw built a fire, and as the flames grew brighter they kindled the tree, and, shooting upward and upward, soon there was a tall column of fire rising nearly a hundred feet above the top of the mountain.

Having set his signal of flame against the black skies the lone highwayman went back down the hill, and, mounting his horse, rode to the valley a mile distant, and where there were signs of a former large encampment.

"They will see the signal and come here," he muttered, as he dismounted, the glare of the burning tree even falling in the valley.

He knew that the pillar of fire would be seen many, many miles away, by the Indian sentinels stationed upon the lofty mountain tops where were their villages, and, reported to Chief Iron Eyes, his young warriors would at once be dispatched to his aid, for warring against their own people the outlaws had as their allies the redskins, who were repaid by booty taken from the whites, and the fact that the Red Hand Riders were ever ready to give them warning of any intended move against them.

In fact the outlaw band, living by murder and robbery, were renegades to their own race and the friends of the Indians.

Having set his blazing signal against the skies, the outlaw leader retreated to the camp where the redskins were wont to make a halting-place when in that part of the country, and there rested for the night.

It was just dawn when he arose and was on the watch, for he expected aid would not long be delayed.

He was right in his surmise, for he saw from his point of lookout a band of horsemen pushing swiftly along toward the spot where he was.

He watched them closely through his field-glass, and, counting the long line of warriors, said to himself:

"It is the young chief Death Face in the lead, and he is a hard fighter and able commander.

"Yes, he has a hundred braves with him, enough to make an ambush with, but not sufficient for an open attack, for the trail of Buffalo Bill and his accursed followers shows at least forty men."

It was a short while before Death Face and his braves came up, and the outlaw chief stepped out of his place of covert and revealed himself to them.

He spoke the Indian tongue fluently, and in an earnest manner said:

"My red brother, the great chief, Death Face, is welcome, and has come quickly to my aid. The fire signal was set to call my red friends to help me, for the scout chief, Buffalo Bill, has been to my retreat and killed and captured my people, has robbed me of all I had, and is retreating slowly to the fort, so I want my red brothers to help me."

The chief was a young man, and of fine physique and dignified mien, while he was most gorgeously attired in the barbaric fashion of the Indians, though his weapons were a belt with two revolvers and a bowie, and a repeating rifle hung at his saddle-horn, for his horse, a fine animal, was equipped with a silver-studded Mexican saddle and bridle.

His hair was worn long, and upon his head was a gorgeous war bonnet of eagle feathers dyed in various hues.

The face and hands of the young chief were curiously and weirdly painted, for upon a black foundation was white skillfully put on to resemble a human skull, and bony fingers.

He had made a record for himself as a fighter, and

was feared and respected by his braves, while he was next in command to Iron Eyes, the head chief.

Having explained the situation to Death Face, the outlaw chief added:

"I am sorry my brother has not more braves with him."

"The Death Face has more braves coming, two more bands, each equal to this one.

"The signal of the white chief was seen, and the Death Face came quickly to his aid, telling other bands to follow.

"Where are the foes of my paleface brother?"

Glad to know that he would have about three hundred braves to make the pursuit with, Captain Eagle explained the situation fully to the young chief, while the warriors rested and prepared breakfast, while waiting for their comrades to come up.

"I had, as the Death Face knows, just returned from a visit to Iron Eyes, and death and ruin greeted me, so I signaled for help.

"The warriors of the Iron Eyes met defeat only a short while ago at the hands of the palefaces, but now they can get their revenge," said the outlaw, and an hour after, leaving a warrior to bring on the others when they arrived, he led the redskin band in pursuit of those who had dealt him a deadly blow.

CHAPTER IV.

THE SCOUT'S REPORT.

Fort Advance was known as the "Plucky Outpost," from the fact that it had been established in the very heart of the Indian country, and had held its own against all odds.

The commandant, Colonel Carr, was one of the best officers in the service and an Indian fighter of renown, and he had picked his command to hold his own.

Having been given a battery of eight guns—four twelve-pounders and four sixes—a battalion of infantry, with horses enough to mount them if necessary, and five troops of cavalry, he also had with him by special request made to the general commanding

the department, Buffalo Bill and two dozen scouts, all of them picked men.

The colonel had also found among the miners who worked in the mountains near the fort, a company of volunteers, so that he had no reason to dread any force the Indians might attack him with if given warning of their coming in time to call his men to arms.

There was, a day's coach ride from Fort Advance, another mining and ranch settlement, combined, known as Pioneer City, and this place could turn out a couple of large companies of fighters in time of need, and had, in conjunction with the military, lately defeated a raid of redskins that had swept down upon them, Buffalo Bill having given timely notice of the intended surprise.

It was just after the defeat of Iron Eyes and his band that the raid of Lieutenant Walter Worth, guided by Buffalo Bill, had been started against the outlaw band of Red Riders, and Colonel Carr was feeling considerable anxiety regarding the fate of the little force of heroes who had gone to the rescue of the captives held by Captain Eagle, when his orderly announced that the chief of scouts had just arrived and asked for an audience.

"Show him in at once," cried the colonel in a tone that showed his desire to know the exact situation of affairs in the front, from one so well able to inform him as was Buffalo Bill.

The scout entered, and his appearance indicated rough riding and hard service.

"Ho, Cody; glad to see you.

"Sit down, and tell me what the news is from your expedition, for I have been more than anxious about all of you."

Buffalo Bill dropped into a chair like a man who was tired, indeed, and said in his quiet way:

"No cause for anxiety now, colonel, for all goes well."

"I am delighted to hear this; but you were pursued by the Indians and had a hot fight of it; but I hope the reinforcements I sent got there in time to aid you."

"In the nick of time, sir, for we were hard pressed, and it was Captain Eagle, the outlaw leader, who urged the redskins on, and they were anxious for revenge after their late defeat."

"Then you did not reach the outlaw retreat as you had hoped?"

"Oh, yes, sir; we got there with both feet, and wiped out the band, save the chief, who was off visiting old Iron Eyes, his ally, so escaped death or capture; but shall I make my report from the first, sir?"

"Yes, do so," and the colonel called for his clerk to take down the scout's report in short-hand and then make a copy of it to be filed.

"To begin, sir, I never believed that the coach had gone down with the River Canyon Bridge the night of that fearful storm, and so I went down the river to look for some trace of it, of the horses, or bodies of the passengers.

"I found the wreckage of the bridge all right along the banks, then a camp with no trail leading to it, but a big one leading from it, and this proved that it had been made during the storm.

"I found in the fires iron and other traces of the coach, showing that it had been burned, and so taking the trail, I sent for Lieutenant Worth, as agreed upon, and then, alone and ahead upon the track of the outlaws, I met one who warned me of the Indian raid upon you, so I came back with the warning, and you know how well they were beaten off, sir."

"The one who warned me was a white woman, living with an old negro man and woman alone upon an island retreat far up in the mountains

"I had met her before, when my horse fell with me, injuring me severely, and she had found me and taken me to her home under an oath of secrecy, and not to betray her.

"Our second meeting was when I saved her from Injun Nick, whom I drove out of Pioneer City, and who intended to kill her, for it seems he had known her in the past.

"Her fall, dragged from her horse by his lariat, hurt her so severely she was unconscious, and so I

carried her to her retreat, and she it was who gave me warning of old Iron Eyes' secret raid.

"Leaving her delirious and to the care of the negress, I came with the warning, and when, after the Indians were beaten back, I went on with Lieutenant Worth's command, I took Surgeon Denmeal to her home and he soon checked her fever and started her on the way to recovery. That beautiful woman, Colonel Carr, is the wife of Captain Eagle, chief of the Red Riders."

"Poor woman."

"She believed him an honorable man, and he brought her to these wilds, with the two negroes, and there she has lived.

"I owe her my life, and we owe it to her that the Indians did not surprise the fort and settlements, sir.

"With her, where the outlaw chief had taken her with her baggage on pack-horses, was Miss Lucille Fallon, the sergeant's daughter."

"Thank God for that!

"Cody, you are a wonder for getting at the bottom of a mystery," and the colonel warmly grasped the hand of the man who had brought him such a cheering report.

"But go on with your story, Cody, for the safety of the sergeant's daughter assures me of the rescue also of Lieutenant Ernest Leslie and the others who were with her on Jessop's coach."

"It does, sir, for where the chief took Miss Lucille to the retreat of his wife, not even known to his own men, he carried the others to his lair in the mountains, and there we found them when we surprised their den."

"Glorious! and where are they?"

"Coming on with Lieutenant Worth, sir, for he told me to come on ahead and make the report, and then I wished to ask you, sir, if I could not guide a troop or two toward the Indian village and cut off the band under the outlaw leader and Chief Death Face in their retreat, for we can do so?"

"A splendid idea, if you are able to make the ride, Cody, for you look jaded."

"Don't mind me, colonel, for I am all right, sir."

"Where did you last see the Indians?"

"They were beaten off, sir, in their last charge about twenty miles above the camp in Canyon River Valley.

"They tried to get ahead to ambush us, but we thwarted them in that, sir."

"And they are now on their retreat?"

"Yes, sir, but will go very slow, for they have plenty of dead to bury and a number of wounded to carry along."

"What force would you suggest, Cody?"

"Two troops, sir, mounted and equipped for fast riding and hard fighting, sir, to strike a blow and then retreat."

The colonel sent his orderly after Captain Taylor, of the Fifth Cavalry, and upon the appearance of that officer gave him orders to get two troops ready at once for a long ride and a fight with Indians.

"I will be ready, colonel, within the hour, sir," was the reply, and the officer took his leave, Buffalo Bill remarking:

"I will take ten of my men along, sir, as scouts."

"Do so; but now finish with your report, Cody."

"There is little more to add, sir, save that the outlaw's wife was most kind to the sergeant's daughter, and she is along with Lieutenant Worth and his command, accompanied by her two faithful negro servants who have shared with her her exile here in this wilderness.

"Mrs. Lamar, for such is her name, is being carried on a stretcher, as she is still quite ill, and Miss Fallon is her devoted nurse.

"In Mrs. Lamar's island home, the secret retreat of Eagle, the outlaw, we found the treasures of the Red Hands, and all that Lieutenant Ernest was robbed of, along with what was also taken from Miss Fallon and the two other passengers."

"And they are all along?"

"All of them, sir."

"It is fortunate none of them were shot by the outlaws."

"They were not, sir, even Jack Jessop, the driver, escaping this time."

"I am glad, for he is a brave fellow, but I fear will not wish to drive the trail again."

"On the contrary, sir, he is anxious to do so, and will relieve Toby Hart at once, he says."

"And Eagle's outlaws?"

"Except those whom we buried, sir, are prisoners along with Bat Brindley, whom I did not have to offer his pardon to if he guided us to the retreat, and so brought him back."

"He richly deserves a rope about his neck."

"No one more so, sir."

"But now you must get ready for your expedition, only I wish you could get a few hours' rest."

"I can rest in the saddle, sir, thank you."

"When will Worth arrive with his party?"

"Not before to-morrow afternoon, sir, for he is forced to travel by very easy marches."

"I hope we can give you a good account of our expedition, sir, and return with the outlaw chief a prisoner," and, with a hearty grasp of the colonel's hand, Buffalo Bill went to his quarters to half an hour after leave the fort with Captain Taylor and his gallant troopers.

They were picked men and horses, seventy-five in number, with rations for ten days, ammunition in plenty and armed with the best weapons.

Half a dozen pack-animals carried the outfit in the way of camping equipage, and the men were riding light for fast and hot work.

Buffalo Bill and ten scouts accompanied the expedition, bringing the force up to eighty-six fighters, all told.

The scout led the way, and after they were well out upon the trail Captain Taylor rode forward and joined him.

"You see, sir, Captain Eagle, as the Red Hand Riders call their chief, was not at his den, but off on a visit to old Iron Eyes, so we missed him," said Buffalo Bill.

"He discovered our raid and pursued with the

young chief Death Face and his band, and we beat them back with heavy loss.

"They are retreating with their dead and wounded, and I thought, sir, by striking this trail from the fort, we could head them off, ambush them and perhaps capture the outlaw chief, at the same time giving another severe blow to the redskins."

"And their force, Cody?"

"As well as I could judge, sir, in their pursuit and attack, about three hundred warriors, though, of course, they may have sent for more braves, which we can look out for."

"That is right."

"Yes, sir; it was for that reason I brought so many of my scouts, as they can be on guard while we are lying in wait, to report any force coming from the Indian villages."

"Well, with my seventy-four gallant fellows, and you and your brave scouts, I do not fear any force less than a thousand, if it comes to a square fight."

"I suppose you want to push on hard?"

"Yes, sir, for, should they retreat more rapidly than I believe they will, we will just be on time, and be able to get into position."

"The horses will then have a chance to rest."

It was late at night when the command went into camp for supper and a few hours' rest, and when dawn broke they had been in the saddle for an hour again on the march.

At noon they had reached the pass, and an hour after were in ambush, for the Indians had not yet passed there on their retreat to their village, thirty miles further up in the mountains.

The situation chosen by Buffalo Bill as the right spot to place an ambush for the retreating redskins was formed by nature in a way to suit the scout's views exactly.

There the river was broad, saddle-girth deep, dotted with rocks that formed rapids, and flowed with great swiftiness.

The fording place was not over a hundred yards wide, with deeper water above and below.

The trail on the other shore led down a steep and

rugged hillside to the river, and on the shore where the scout had placed the soldiers there was a rocky lowland for a couple of hundred yards and then the trail led into a narrow canyon several miles through to a valley beyond.

The scout had crossed the river at a ford some miles below and picked his way up along the lowland bank to the pass, thus leaving no trail from the Indian village, or to it.

Across the river half a dozen scouts and twice as many soldiers had gone, crossing on horses which had then been led back again, and these men, under a lieutenant, had taken up a position to advance from when the fight began and thus check the retreat of the redskins in a measure, for the latter would at once start for another ford a dozen miles up the river the scout felt certain.

The rest of the scouts were sent through the canyon toward the Indian village to give timely notice of any force advancing from that direction.

This left Captain Taylor, Buffalo Bill and about sixty soldiers to go into ambush at the mouth of the pass, so as to command the ford.

The ambush had not been formed a moment too soon, for a signal came from one of the scouts on the other shore to be on the lookout, as the Indians were approaching.

The scout signaled from a hilltop from which he had a view of the trail beyond the ridge for half a dozen miles.

"They have retreated more rapidly than I expected they would, sir," said Buffalo Bill.

"Well, we are ready for them, or soon will be," answered Captain Taylor, and he ordered his men into their positions of hiding, scattered among the rocks on the steep side of the ridge which the canyon, or pass, split in twain.

"They are pushing to cross the river and camp for the night where our horses now are," added the scout.

"Well, they won't get there, Bill, if we can help it."

"No, sir; but I do hope that Captain Eagle is along."

"Yes, and I have given all the men orders not to fire on him, for he must be taken alive and hanged."

Buffalo Bill slightly started at this, and then, as he turned to go to his point of observation, for he was to give the signal when to open fire, he muttered:

"Well, it would be a good thing to capture and hang that fellow, the chief of the Red Hands with the rest of his gang of cutthroats; but should he be carried in a prisoner it would be a cruel blow to his beautiful wife, to feel that he would die at the rope end, and perhaps set her back in her recovery. If he was killed, she would be readily resigned to his fate, though he does not deserve the mercy of such a death.

"I guess I will make the outlaw's pretty wife a widow by putting a bullet through his brain, for that will be merciful to her—yes, that will be best," and the scout took up his position among the rocks at a point that gave him a good view of the ford and approach to the pass.

The defeat of the redskin army under Chief Iron Eyes some time before and again in their attack on the rescue party under Lieutenant Worth, Buffalo Bill felt would be two lessons they would never forget, while the ambush then laid for them would really strike a panic to their hearts and command a peace along the frontier for some time to come.

If they could also kill the outlaw chief, then the work would be a glorious one, indeed, for his men who were prisoners would be quickly hanged for their crimes.

While the chief of scouts was thus musing the man on the hilltop across the river waved his flag three times around his head.

"The Indians very near."

"Now to shoot the outlaw chief and spare his lovely wife greater sorrow," was Buffalo Bill's resolve as he prepared for the fray.

As silent as death, the soldiers lay in their ambush, awaiting a call from the scout to rise and begin work, for not a man was visible.

Buffalo Bill, alone on the watch, was to call out to Captain Taylor the moment when it would be well to open fire, and that officer's clear voice would give the command to his men to begin their deadly work.

Watching the top of the distant ridge, shielded by a rock and pine bush, Buffalo Bill saw a redskin horseman ride into view.

The scouts then had already skipped to their hiding-places.

The Indian halted a moment, gazing at the scene as though enjoying the picturesque beauty spread out before him.

Then he rode slowly on down the trail.

Soon after half a dozen other horsemen appeared, and behind them came a band of thirty, at their head riding two men whose appearance at once riveted the scout's gaze.

"There they are, Death Face, the young chief, and Captain Eagle.

They were riding side by side and behind them came their immediate bodyguard of warriors.

Following this party came a number of Indian ponies dragging *travois*, bearing the Indian dead and wounded, for they had rigged up a means of carrying the bodies and the injured from the field.

Buffalo Bill counted the ponies dragging the *travois*, and muttered:

"Sixty.

"If every *travois* means a dead or wounded redskin we hit them hard; but wait until we open here, pard, and we'll hit you harder still," and the scout smiled grimly at the gruesome work before him, for, though he held sympathy for the Indian, he yet felt that the severest means of punishment would soonest teach them to bury the tomahawk and be content to live in peace.

The ponies bearing the dead and wounded were followed by the main body of the Indians, some two hundred in number, and by the time the last of these, the rear guard, had crossed the ridge, the advance was in the river.

Stopping for their horses to drink, those in ad-

vance were quickly overtaken by those in the rear, and the whole party were heaped together.

The wounded were lifted to the backs of ponies now, for they could not be dragged through the river, and those most seriously hurt were held on by braves mounted behind them.

The dead were not taken from their resting-places on the *travois*, for nothing could harm them.

When the advance reached the other shore, they at once turned off for the lowland beyond the ledge and willows, as Buffalo Bill had surmised they would do, to camp there for the night.

When about half the force had crossed, and the balance were in the river, Buffalo Bill decided to give his signal to Captain Taylor.

The Indians had ridden along strangely silent and subdued, evidently pondering over their heavy losses of late and hoping for revenge.

Not a thought of danger ahead disturbed them until suddenly echoing from cliff to cliff, clear, wild and terrible, rang out the well-known warcry of Buffalo Bill.

It at once caused a terrible scene of excitement in the Indian ranks, which was added to when Captain Taylor's commanding voice called to his men to fire, and three score carbines rattled forth showers of leaden hail.

Ponies and warriors went down, the redskin braves shrunk back, staggered, bleeding and demoralized.

Some answered the fire of death with defiant warcries and shots, and those in the river began to retreat.

Again the carbines flashed, and in one mass of confusion and terror the redskins began the retreat across the river, just as the scouts and troopers on the other shore opened a hot fire upon them.

But they seemed to realize that their greatest danger lay ahead, and they surged frantically back upon the trail they had come, leaving their dead and dying behind them, and driven to desperation by the savage blow dealt upon them.

But there was one who did not turn back with the others.

He had started to do so, hesitated, and then, deciding upon his course, had wheeled to the right and dashed up along the river bank.

It was the quickest way to get out from under that terrible death-dealing fire.

It was the outlaw chief, and he went alone, for no redskin followed his example, and their young chief had pointed to retreat the way they had come.

The soldiers, remembering their orders, did not fire at the flying chief, and Buffalo Bill was not able to do so in time to check his flight, being down the stream from the ford.

But he saw his act, and, leaping out of cover, ran, at the risk of his life, for the bullets of the redskins pattered about him, to where the pony of a chief had run, his rider having been slain.

Leaping upon the back of the animal, he had turned him in chase of the fugitive outlaw, to find the horse was of little speed.

Instantly he wheeled about, and, dashing the spurs into his flanks, he drove him at full speed down toward where the troop's horses were corralled.

In a few moments he dashed out of the willow thicket, mounted upon his own splendid horse Lucifer, and went off like a rocket in pursuit of the outlaw.

"Don't mind me, Captain Taylor, for I want that man's scalp, and you have won the fight," called out Buffalo Bill, as he dashed by Captain Taylor, who, with his men, had now come out of ambush and were preparing to mount their horses as they were brought up by the men in charge of them, to make a show of pursuit of the Indians.

Captain Taylor made reply, but Buffalo Bill did not hear him as he dashed away, a lone pursuer upon the outlaw's trail.

CHAPTER V.

AFTER THE FIGHT.

The redskins had been rallied from their panic by the skill and cool courage of their young chief, Death Face.

He had quickly realized that the ambush had been ahead, that the scattering shots from the other shore showed but a small force in their rear for effect, and that his course was to recross and strike up the river bank for the upper ford, especially as a mile away there was a place where he could make a stand and beat back the soldiers on his track.

He picked up what wounded he could, but felt compelled to leave his dead, and in solid force crossed the river in spite of the double fire now poured upon him.

He saw that the outlaw chief had acted wisely in the course he had pursued, but then he could not have rallied his warriors to go in that direction, so did the next best thing and recrossed the river.

It was his intention to hurl his whole force upon the small party there and wipe them out; but this had been anticipated by Captain Taylor and Buffalo Bill, and orders had been given the men in charge of the horses to bring them up the moment they saw the Indians attempt to recross the stream.

This they did and the quick mounted pursuit saved the soldiers and scouts across the river.

Forcing his wounded on ahead, Death Face rallied his braves in the rear to retreat slowly and protect them, and showers of bullets and arrows were fired upon the soldiers as they crossed the river in chase.

But they did not dare tarry long, for from the rocks the little band on the ridge poured a hot fire upon them, forcing them to quicken their pace and give up all idea of displacing them in the short time they had to do it in.

It was true that the redskins emptied half a dozen saddles, and brought down twice as many horses as the troopers crossed the river, but it did not check them and the pursuit was pressed so hotly by Captain Taylor that the Indians were forced into a run in spite of their young chief's cries for them to make a stand.

Reaching the rocks, where they could make a stand, they halted, and Captain Taylor wisely and promptly checked the pursuit, knowing that he would lose heavily, and that the Indians would con-

due their flight for the upper ford, and thence on to their village as soon as night came on.

The captain, too, had seen several couriers ride on ahead, among the first to get across, and he knew this meant a rapid ride to the Indian village for aid, and that by morning, or soon after, a force would be upon him which he could not withstand.

There was then but one thing for him to do, and that was to make a show of pursuit until nightfall, and then retreat for the fort at once, taking the trail back the way the Indians had come, but dispatching scout-couriers on the trail the troopers had come to the ford to warn Colonel Carr to send a force out in that direction to guard against a surprise, which in their frenzy the redskins might attempt upon the fort, seeing that the soldiers had retreated in the other direction.

A council was quickly held among the officers, and the scouts were ordered as soon as darkness came to recross the river and go back to the fort by the trail they had come, with dispatches for Colonel Carr, and to ride rapidly but not break their horses down.

The rest of the command, after burying their dead comrades, would retreat on the redskins' trail to the river, carrying their wounded with them.

The redskins' dead and wounded would be left to the care of the braves who would come in the morning to look after them, when they found the soldiers gone.

"But how about Cody?" said Captain Taylor when their plans had been arranged.

"I fear he has placed himself in a very perilous position," the captain of the troop that had come with Captain Taylor's own command said.

"He went off on the track of that outlaw like a whirlwind; but it is a dangerous undertaking, as the man being pursued can go into ambush and kill his pursuer."

"Yes, captain, and, having gone up the river, Buffalo Bill is on the side of the Indian village, and if he pursues the outlaw far he will be between the red-

skins coming from their camps and those now in retreat," a lieutenant said.

"Well, I shall leave a couple of scouts on the other side to watch for his return, and two men here, in case he should cross before those Indians yonder get up to the other ford and come down this side.

"I am sorry that he went, but the men I leave will know how to take care of themselves when morning comes, and their horses will have a good night's rest.

"As for ourselves, as it is growing dark, we will set out on the march, for we must get well beyond the ridge before we camp, and then be off again at dawn," said Captain Taylor.

It was a strange coincidence that, as night was coming on, both Indians and soldiers were preparing to run away from each other.

The former feared, as the soldiers did not press the pursuit, they had other forces near who were marching around toward the other ford to catch them with overhanging cliffs on one side, a river on the other and between two squadrons of foes.

They longed to get across the river by the upper ford, and then they would make a stand until help came from their villages, help they had sent after already, and which would come in two columns, on the trails to both fords.

The soldiers were anxious to get away, for they had no help, they knew their weakness and were well aware of the strength the Indians could bring against them within twelve hours.

By a night retreat they could go many miles before halting to camp for rest and food.

Then, after another ride before dawn and after, by the time they halted for breakfast they would be many miles from the scene of conflict just about the time the Indian reinforcements were arriving there.

With such a start they had nothing to fear, for, no matter if hundreds of warriors were in the saddle against them, they would not dare venture far across the river in pursuit, after the bitter and deadly lessons they had lately learned.

The scouts left on the scene, with a night's rest for

their horses, the captain was sure would easily distance all pursuit as far as the Indians would venture, for they would expect to be led into an ambush.

But it was the absence of Buffalo Bill that troubled Captain Taylor and all of his men.

The chief of scouts had dashed away in pursuit of his bitterest foe.

He had gone alone, and on the Indian side of the river, where small bands of hunters might be met at any moment.

He had gone in chase of a man who was skilled in border craft, cunning, fearless and dangerous, and was as artful as a redskin.

A man who had had his band of outlaws wiped out by the very man who pursued him, who had been forced to fly to safety among the Indians, and whose treasures had been taken from him, and his wife also had gone with his enemies.

Was it a wonder then that he would seek revenge upon Buffalo Bill and risk life to get it?

The scout, anxious also to capture the outlaw chief, would strain every nerve and take chances that at another time he would not do.

These thoughts flashed through Captain Taylor's mind, and he told his officers how he felt regarding the safety of the scout, and they, too, shared his anxiety.

And yet, to have remained on the river bank awaiting his return would have been madness, so the order to march had been given as soon as darkness fell, and just as the Indians, too, were pulling out in hot haste for the upper ford.

The dead were carried along by the soldiers, to bury when they made their camp, and the wounded were cared for as well as circumstances would admit.

During the night march one of the worst of the wounded troopers died, but his body was strapped upon one of the captured Indian ponies and carried along with the others.

It was just an hour before midnight when the scout who was guiding, and who had been on the

trail before, led the way to a camp where water, wood and grass were plentiful.

The tired horses were staked out, fires were built, supper put on, and graves were dug for the dead while the surgeon dressed the wounds of those who had needed his aid most.

Then supper was served, sentinels placed, and the tired troopers threw themselves down and slept soundly.

Buffalo Bill's scouts were the self-imposed guards, for, like their chief, they had wonderful powers of endurance and were glad to let the soldiers rest.

After four hours' rest they roused the camp, as ordered by Captain Taylor, and fifteen minutes after the march was again begun.

Until eight o'clock they held on, and then a halt was made for breakfast and a long rest, for there was no danger of pursuit then, and Captain Taylor was anxious to have the scouts overtake him.

It was nearly noon when the two left on the ride arrived.

They reported the hasty retreat of the Indians under Death Face, the arrival of several hundred warriors on the other shore soon after sunrise, and the going of the two scouts left across the river, and seeing their signal that Buffalo Bill had not joined them during the night.

Nor had the scout joined the two scouts who brought in the report, and a gloom fell upon all for dread that Buffalo Bill had met his doom at last.

Captain Taylor called his officers together and held a council of war.

It was at last decided that as the expedition had been simply to ambush the retreating Indians and administer to them a severe lesson, this having been accomplished, there was nothing left to be done but to return to the fort and report the result, with the fact that Buffalo Bill was missing, and it was feared harm had befallen him.

Then several of the scouts came up and asked to be allowed to remain behind and search for their chief.

This request was granted, Captain Taylor calling

for volunteers, and Hugh Hardin and four of his scout comrades went back on the trail in search of Buffalo Bill, while the troopers continued on toward Fort Advance.

It was a sad march of the troopers back to the fort, for another of the wounded men died on the way, running the death roll up to seven men, with twice as many wounded.

But they had accomplished their purpose—hit the redskins a terrible blow, slaying many of them, wounding many more and capturing half a hundred ponies.

But there was gloom on account of Buffalo Bill's disappearance, more sorrow being felt for the popular scout's fate than for the dead soldiers.

Soldiers could be replaced, there were many of them, but only one Buffalo Bill, the idol of plainsmen, and one whose fame was earned by deeds of desperate daring.

After an absence of five days, the company came in sight of the fort.

All hoped to find Buffalo Bill there, and the first question of Captain Taylor was:

"Has Cody arrived?"

"No, Taylor; and we hoped he was with you."

Captain Taylor at once went to headquarters to report, and Colonel Carr was seated upon his piazza and said quickly:

"Glad to see you back, Captain Taylor, and congratulate you upon your victory, which the scouts brought news of, but is Cody with you?"

"No, Colonel Carr; I did hope to find him here."

"No, and his two men reported that he went off alone in chase of the outlaw chief, Eagle."

"He did, sir, and has not been seen since."

"This is bad, very bad; but he is like a cat and may yet turn up, for I've set him down as dead many times; in fact, he has nine times nine lives."

"I hope he may put in an appearance, for our victory was wholly owing to him, and it was one the redskins will remember. I felt it best to return to the fort, sir, over the Indians' trail, but I left Hugh

Hardin and four other scouts to look for Buffalo Bill."

"Heaven grant they find him, and Hardin is the man to do it if any one can. If they do not return with him to-morrow I will send out another searching party, for Lieutenant Walter Worth has asked to go."

The captain retired to his quarters, where a few moments after Sergeant Fallon came and asked for an interview.

"I am happy to hear that your daughter was restored to you, sergeant, and trust that she is well, as also your invalid guest."

"Yes, sir, my daughter is well and loves the life here, while Mrs. Lamar is improving rapidly; but I came to ask you regarding the chief of scouts, sir, for it is said that he is thought to have been killed and by the outlaw chief?"

"It is only surmise, sergeant, as Cody dashed off in pursuit of the outlaw, and did not return. Five of his scouts are searching for him, and if they do not return with news of him to-morrow, the colonel will send out a search party after him."

"I should like to go along, sir, and have a hand in his rescue, for I owe more than life to him, sir, in returning to me my child."

"I will speak to the colonel for you, then, and it will be Lieutenant Worth who commands the party."

"Then if Buffalo Bill can be found, sir, he is the one to do it," earnestly said the sergeant, and he added:

"I will report to Mrs. Lamar and my daughter then, sir, that Buffalo Bill is only missing, for they urged me to come to you and ask about him, sir," and the sergeant returned to his quarters.

CHAPTER VI.

THE RETURN OF THE SEARCH PARTY.

Anxiously a watch was kept up by the sentinels and others at the fort for some sign of the scout's return.

The fort was well situated on two sides of a swift-

flowing stream, and where the land sloped from it on every side.

It was well timbered in the inclosure of a dozen acres, and in the meadows below were gardens fenced in, and corrals for the cattle and horses to be placed, in threatened danger from an Indian raid.

Off on the hills near the cowboys and horse-herders had their cabins, and down the valley was a settlement of several hundreds, with miners dwelling up in the mountains a few miles distant.

The fort was a strong one, with stockade walls and earthen breastworks; it was delightfully situated and surrounded by beautiful scenery, while game of all kinds abounded near, rendering it a most desirable post for officers and their families.

There were a number of officers' wives and children at the fort, a school for the latter, a chapel in which the chaplain officiated on Sunday, a dancing hall, and all sports were encouraged.

Colonel Carr was an ideal officer, a perfect disciplinarian, but courteous and kind to all, and life at Fort Advance, in spite of its dangerous situation, was much enjoyed by all dwellers there.

Buffalo Bill, as chief of scouts, and on account of his record and personal attractions as well, received the same respect and consideration bestowed upon a commissioned officer, and with one and all he was a favorite, so that the dread that he had met with death at the hands of the outlaw chief cast a damper upon all.

His late brilliant deeds had endeared him still more to all, and there was a cloud of gloom hovering about every cabin and campfire as long as his fate was unknown and it was feared that he had met his death.

Particularly did his corps of scouts grieve for him, and, though he had been reported killed and looked upon as dead time and again before, yet it seemed now that he must have been slain, or why had he not returned to camp?

If he had been captured by the Indians, all knew what a terrible fate would be his.

That the five scouts who had gone back to look for some trace of him did not return looked ominous for Buffalo Bill, the men in the barracks thought.

In the officers' club the missing scout was the theme of conversation, and all felt glad when it was known that Lieutenant Walter Worth had volun-

teered to go out with a party and find him, or know what had befallen him.

That dashing young officer was the idol of the soldiers, and he had a way of getting at bottom facts when sent on any mission, and of accomplishing such wonders that the truth would soon be known if he started out in search of the chief of scouts, and Colonel Carr had promised to allow him to go if the five men then absent did not return that day.

In the home of Sergeant Fallon the tension felt was great regarding Buffalo Bill's not coming in.

The part the scout had taken in the rescue of Lucille Fallon had greatly endeared him to the sergeant, while his daughter had learned to admire him by ties of the strongest friendship.

The outlaw's wife, Mildred Lamar, had nearly regained her strength again, after her long sickness, but the suspense she was in could not but retard her recovery.

She had once dearly loved her husband, believing him noble and true; but her idol had been shattered when she found him out to be a vile murderer and robber.

Freed from him by going to the fort with his fair captive, Lucille Fallon, she had hoped never to hear of him again.

But in vain the hope, for the truth became known to her that he had allied himself with Indians, openly leading them against Lieutenant Worth and Buffalo Bill's rescue party, and then, when attacked by Captain Taylor's command he had been at their head with the young chief, Death Face.

Pursued by Buffalo Bill, the fate of the scout and the outlaw chief was unknown, and hence the suspense fell heavily upon the wife, more so than upon others.

Had she known that her lawless husband was dead she could have rested content, but that he had killed Buffalo Bill and still lived on for further red deeds was a cruel burden to bear.

As night came on the sentinel reported a party of horsemen coming down the mountain trail.

They were counted, and found to be five in number.

They were then recognized as Hugh Hardin and his four comrades, left behind to find their chief.

Buffalo Bill was not with them.

Upon arrival at the fort Hugh Hardin went to headquarters to make his report.

They had scouted up and down the river, and discovered that the Indians had placed camps of sentinels at each of the three fords, so that they could not cross to reconnoiter on the other side.

They had found no trace of Buffalo Bill, and in vain tried to capture a brave to learn, if they could, if he had been killed or captured.

That the outlaw chief, Captain Eagle, had not been killed was certain, for all of the scouts had seen him with Chief Death Face, ride to the redskin camp at the ford and scan the shores across the river with his glass.

The dead Indians and the wounded had all been removed by their comrades, and no one else than themselves, the five scouts, had been seen on the other shore of the river.

Believing and hoping that Buffalo Bill had escaped death or capture, they had returned to the fort, trusting to find him there and make their report.

Colonel Carr listened to the report with a clouded brow.

It seemed to foreshadow the fate of Buffalo Bill. "Well, Hardin, you have done your duty, all that you could do, and were right in returning. How many redskins were in the sentinel camps?"

"All of fifty, sir."

"At each ford?"

"Yes, sir."

"You went to each ford?"

"We did, sir."

"And they just camped there?"

"Yes, sir, but they had scouts patrolling up and down the river, we could see, and once or twice we thought they were coming across, and then we intended to capture them; but they thought better of it and never ventured more than half way over."

The colonel soon after dismissed the scout, just as Lieutenant Worth made his appearance.

"Pardon me, Colonel Carr, but I have come to again request, sir, that I may go in search of Scout Cody."

"I was just going to send for you, Lieutenant Worth. Sit down, and we will talk it over."

"I have just had a report from Scout Hardin that he could find no trace of his chief, that the three fords are guarded on the other side of the river by fifty Indians, and he saw both the redskin chief and the outlaw Eagle visiting these sentinel posts."

"That means, sir, that the outlaw captain was not killed?"

"Yes, he is not dead."

"The scouts were sure?"

"Yes."

"It looks as though Buffalo Bill might have been killed, then, by the outlaw?"

"I am sorry to say it has that appearance, Worth."

"May I not go, sir, and try to ascertain the real situation?"

"You may do so; but what is your idea about going?"

"Sergeant Fallon is anxious to go, sir, so Captain Taylor informs me, and I would wish for no better man."

"Very true; but you surely would not go only with the sergeant?"

"No, sir, for I would like to have Scouts Will Palmer, Hugh Hardin and four others of their comrades whom these two may select, along with Corporal Kane and eight of my troop, sir, picked men and horses all of them."

"That would give you sixteen men under your command?"

"Yes, sir, six of whom are Buffalo Bill's own men, nine of my own troop and Sergeant Fallon, who is a host in himself, sir."

"Very true," and the colonel was silent a moment in thought.

Then he said:

"Lieutenant Worth, I have every confidence in the world in you, and I also feel that a small force is better than a large one, so I am willing you shall go, but I desire to send with you also Surgeon Denmead, for you may need his services. Then, too, I will send an officer, your inferior in rank, of course, with thirty men and a light gun to be within call, close call, should you need aid, on the trail Buffalo Bill led Captain Taylor by, and a like number with a gun, by the trail Taylor returned by, to camp at certain points you may designate where they can be called upon, if necessary, or you can retreat to. Of course, with each command I will send several scouts, and thus aided, by knowing you have relief at hand, you can venture much more than otherwise would be prudent, and you know the Indians are just now in a frenzied mood at their losses and defeats."

"I thank you, Colonel Carr, for your kindness, for this aid you give me will be of great benefit, sir."

"I will talk over the matter with Hardin and Palmer, and decide upon the camps for the relief forces to remain and inform you, sir, and I would like to make a start to-night, with your leave, they starting at dawn."

"You can do so, starting at your will."

It took the lieutenant little time to arrange matters, and two hours after he rode away from the fort at the head of his little command to go on the search for Buffalo Bill.

CHAPTER VII.

A CLEVER DEVICE.

Lieutenant Worth rode away from the fort with his command, while the sun was yet two hours high.

He wished to press on to a camping ground thirty miles away, and with an early start the following morning, be able to reach the scene of the late battle while it was broad daylight.

With his scouts well ahead, they would soon discover if the Indians were yet encamped at the ford, and the two other crossings could be reconnoitered to discover if they were also guarded.

If the three crossings of the river were guarded, then there must be some way planned to capture a redskin, or get across to the other shore and begin a scout in search of Buffalo Bill.

The camping place was reached in good time, supper was had, guards placed, and the command was soon fast asleep.

But they made an early start, and it was while the sun was yet an hour above the horizon that the halt was called within a few miles of the center of the three fords, to await the reports of the scouts sent to see if they were still guarded.

The scout sent to the lower ford first returned and reported having seen the Indians encamped on the other shore, for he had climbed a high tree and looking over a ridge, had seen half a hundred ponies staked out, but no redskin visible.

The next scout to report was Will Palmer, who had gone to the middle ford, the main trail across the river, and the scene of Captain Taylor's fight with the Indians.

He had surveyed the other shore with his glass and had discovered an Indian sentinel among the rocks, but could not see others, though he was sure they were there.

It was just at sunset when the third scout returned.

He had gone to the upper of the three fords, riding ahead of the command slowly in the morning, and he had discovered a camp of about half a hundred Indians on the other shore.

This proved that the Indians were still guarding the fords, either from the fact that they expected a raid from the soldiers in force, or knew that Buffalo Bill was across the river and they wished to capture him, for the banks of the stream were such that only crossings at the three fords could be made for many long miles.

As he was now convinced that there was no chance of crossing the river, save by strategy, Lieutenant Worth decided to move his command to a good camping place a mile back from the center ford and from there send his scouts out to work.

The rendezvous for the two commands to come to his support were to be on the river trail, and the one across country, some twenty miles away from his camping place.

The camp was reached after nightfall, but Hugh Hardin knew it well and it was found to be a very secure hiding place, with fine pasturage for the horses, a good stream and wood in plenty, though cooking could only be done at night, as the smoke in the daytime would betray them to the Indians.

That night the lieutenant, leaving Sergeant Fallon in command, went with Scouts Hardin and Palmer and reconnoitered to the ford.

They saw the glimmer of the Indian campfires upon the other side, and the young officer said:

"I shall to-morrow see if we cannot trap a redskin, for some of them must cross to this side.

"We will be in wait for them."

So the next day the scouts and soldiers were in ambush all day, but no redskin came across the stream, though at times a dozen or more were discovered on the other side.

"May I suggest a plan to catch one, sir?" said Sergeant Fallon.

"Certainly, sergeant."

"My horse is trained, sir, and I will take position myself to-morrow before dawn down among the rocks, and he will stay about feeding near me.

"He will come at my low call, and the redskins seeing him, and thinking he is a stray animal, will come across to catch him.

"Seeing them, he will draw near to me, and I can catch one with a lasso, for hardly will more than one

come across, but should more come, I will retreat up the trail, the horse will follow and he will draw them into an ambush."

"The very thing to be done, sergeant, and you shall carry it out as you have planned," said the lieutenant.

The next morning the sergeant was in position before daybreak, and his horse, stripped of saddle and bridle, was feeding near him.

The position chosen was a good one, for from the other side no one could see what occurred, unless they were just directly opposite.

It was about an hour after sunrise when from his point of observation Lieutenant Worth saw an Indian horseman ride into view on the other side.

He came down to the river, rode in, and had his lariat in hand as he drew toward the shore, when his gaze fell upon the sergeant's horse calmly feeding.

Reaching the bank, he came slowly forward, all ready to throw his coil, and as he drew near the horse, the animal slowly retreated before him, but came to a halt after going a short distance, and the redskin prepared to catch him.

The redskin eyed the horse anxiously and longingly as he went toward him.

He had seen the animal from across the river, and saying nothing to his companions, had mounted his own pony and ridden over to capture a prize.

Being the sentinel on duty, he could not be seen from the camp of the other Indians over in the meadow beyond the willows, and he was anxious to get possession of his prize before any one else knew of its being there.

That the horse had gotten away from the soldiers, after the battle, he believed, and he certainly had the appearance of being a very fine animal.

So, when he got near the horse, which stood calmly surveying him, he coiled his long lariat and prepared to catch him.

His lariat flew from his hand with great force, and straight as an arrow went toward the head of the horse.

But the sergeant's horse seemed trained to avoid a noose, for he quickly ducked his head and the coil struck him on the neck and failed to catch.

But at the same instant there came a whizzing sound from one side of the redskin, a dark object floated in the air, a noose encircled the body of the

Indian, and with a sharp twang he was dragged from the back of his horse to the ground.

The pony, wheeling in fright, the redskin fell heavily, with stunning force, and before he could realize what had happened, there bounded a form toward him, a quick turn of the lasso was taken around his neck, and he was choked so as to prevent an outcry or resistance.

Raising him in his strong arms, the sergeant bore him back into the canyon, where Lieutenant Worth and Scout Palmer was, having seen the clever capture.

"I'll bring his pony in, too, sir," said Sergeant Fallon, and in a short while he came back with his own and the Indian's pony and suggested that they take the prisoner beyond the hearing of an outcry, should he attempt to give warning of danger to his comrades.

So the prisoner was taken quickly back to the camp, and there, under the care of Surgeon Denmead, rallied from the choking he had received from the sergeant.

To the surprise of the lieutenant and those about him, who did not know that he spoke the Indian tongue, the sergeant addressed his captive in Cheyenne, speaking fluently.

The Cheyenne seemed surprised at hearing his native language spoken by a paleface, then glanced fixedly into his face for a moment and responded to what the sergeant had said to him.

For a few minutes the two talked together, only the scout Hugh Hardin being able now and then to pick up a word.

Then the sergeant turned to Lieutenant Worth and said:

"I told him, sir, that we knew of his camp across the river, and at the other fords, but that we were searching for Pa-e-has-ka,* and unless he told me the truth about him, I would scalp him and send him back to his people a disgraced squaw."

"And what does he say, sergeant?"

"That he only knows that the scout pursued the white outlaw chief on the day of the battle, for he was with Death Face in that fight, belonging to the young chief's band, and that the Red Hand stated that he had gone on to the Indian village, to bring

*Buffalo Bill is called by the Indians Pa-e-has-ka, which means Long Hair.
THE AUTHOR.

more warriors to the scene, and had not seen the chief of scouts."

"Do you believe him, sergeant?"

"I do, sir, for he would only be too glad to let me know that Buffalo Bill had been killed or captured."

"He says also, sir, that when the outlaw captain heard that Buffalo Bill had gone in chase of him, and had not crossed the river with the troops, he asked Death Face to send his young warriors on his trail and capture him, but all had come in with the same report, that they had tracked the scout to a spot on the river bank, where the trail ended, for either the horse had been forced to leap from the cliff, or he had been thrown off for some purpose, and that Buffalo Bill had taken the chances of swimming across the stream, where the river was wide and dashed along at a rapid rate, though upon the other shore it was possible to land, if he reached it."

"Indian scouts had gone up to the spot on the other shore, and searched for some sign of a trail where a horse or man had left the water, but none was found, and it was the belief of Chief Death Face, and also of Captain Eagle, that the great scout had attempted to swim across the river and both he and his horse had been drowned."

"Then that means that Buffalo Bill is dead," sadly said Lieutenant Worth. "The only thing for us to do is to return to the fort and report our failure."

CHAPTER VIII.

THE SCOUT'S PURSUIT.

It will be well now to follow on the trail of Buffalo Bill, when he dashed away in hot pursuit of Captain Eagle, the leader of the Red Hands.

Having to ride the Indian pony he had captured, to the corral, and there get his own matchless horse Lucifer, had delayed him so that the outlaw had all of ten minutes' start of him.

But Buffalo Bill, in his lone scouting expeditions, had ventured into the neighborhood of the Indian village, and he knew the country thereabout well.

He was aware that the chief could only retreat by one trail up the river for miles, and then, by a flank movement, would reach the other ford.

From it the trail would lead to the Indian village, and that would be the way the chief would doubtless go.

As there was no turning off point, speed was what

would be required to overtake the outlaw, and the scout was anxious to come up with him as soon as possible and end the affair.

He felt glad that it would be a death shot for the outlaw, rather than capture and being taken to the fort where he would be hanged, thus bringing a deeper sorrow upon his unfortunate wife.

Under other circumstances, were it not for that poor wife, the scout would have been more than content to let the outlaw suffer the penalty for his many crimes as he justly deserved, at the rope's end.

But now, should he come up with him, it would be a duel to the death between them.

The trail of the outlaw in his flight showed that he was urging his horse to his fullest speed.

Coming to a place among steep cliffs on either side, the scout saw that there was no trace of a trail.

But the outlaw could not have turned off, and so must have gone on, only the nature of the ground preventing any hooftracks being made.

Noticing ahead that there were places among the rocks where a horse and man could hide, Buffalo Bill went more cautiously.

The outlaw would doubtless expect to be pursued, and therefore he would prepare against a foe.

But the scout went on, though with greater caution only.

Did it come to a trial of speed, he knew that Lucifer was more than a match for even the far-famed fleet steed of Captain Eagle.

The nature of the ground still prevented any trace of the trail being seen until suddenly the scout came to where it was revealed again.

It led on ahead along a canyon for a short distance, and then there was a cliff on the one side, and a hundred yards away the bank of the river.

The scout halted for a moment, and then a search showed that the trail of the outlaw's horse continued on around the cliff, here and there revealed where there were patches of earth covering the rocky ground.

It was not over three miles to the upper ford, and Buffalo Bill concluded that the outlaw must be a mile ahead of him.

So he decided to ride on to the upper ford, and he did not come up with him to cross, make a wide detour so as not to meet the retreating Indians on the other side, for he had seen them turn up the bank of the river, and thus regain Captain Taylor's com-

mand again at the lower ford, for they would remain there all night, he supposed, or retreating, would march slowly, as there were wounded to carry along.

But he hoped that the outlaw would come to a halt, or he would overtake him, and thus bring on a duel between them for there was a feud of long standing between Buffalo Bill and the Red Hand Riders, and he was more than willing to take his chances in an encounter with the chief.

Just as he started on again, happening to glance over toward the river, Buffalo Bill was startled to see the outlaw ride into view, and coming down the river.

This seemed to indicate that he had doubled on his trail on ahead, ridden over to the river and followed along the edge of the cliff as though to return to the lower ford, when believing he was not followed.

He did not see the scout, that was certain, but rode leisurely along, having just come into view from riding out of a ravine which he had to cross to continue on along the bank.

Buffalo Bill waited until he got directly opposite to him, so that he would not be able to dash at once to cover, and then he prepared to act.

He could have dropped the man from his saddle without a word; but he was too brave a man to take an advantage even of the outlaw.

No, he would give him a warning at least, of his presence, and that it must be a fight to the death between them.

The outlaw's gaze was across the river, as he rode along, as though he was looking in that direction for danger, little dreaming that it was so near at hand.

"Hands up, pard!"

The voice of the scout rang out clear as a bell, determined and threatening, and he had his rifle across his arm as he gave the ominous order.

Lucifer stood like a statue, facing the river, and the scout had the outlaw within four hundred feet of him, his rifle ready for use.

At the first word the outlaw's horse was reined back suddenly, and first dropping his hand upon his revolver, he then grasped his rifle and swung it round for quick use, wholly unmindful of the command to raise his hands that came from Buffalo Bill.

Buffalo Bill felt that he had done his duty in warning the outlaw of his presence.

He had called out to him to raise his hands, with the hope that he would refuse, and refusing, attempt

to fight it out, for, as I have stated, he did not wish to capture him and have to carry him to the fort.

The outlaw did just what the scout expected him to do, that is, attempt to fire on him.

He saw that the distance was beyond revolver range, and so he grasped his rifle.

The scout was not hurried in his movements.

He could have fired at the end of his sentence.

But now as the outlaw had his rifle in hand he ran his eyes along the sights and pulled trigger.

The quick movement of the fugitive, however, startled his horse, and as he grasped the rein to restrain the animal, he did so with a jerk on the bit that seemed to madden the beast, as he reared wildly just as the scout pulled trigger.

The bullet sped on, but whether to a target in the horse or his rider, Buffalo Bill did not know, for the rearing animal staggered backward as the leaden messenger sped on its errand, and with a cry of fright almost human in its tones, went over the cliff.

There was a human cry, too, as the rider went down with his horse, still in the saddle, and it came from the outlaw's lips.

Over the cliff with a crash went horse and rider, and Buffalo Bill cried:

"My God! they have plunged over together.

"That means the end of the chief of the Red Riders of the Overland."

With the utterance of his words, he spurred forward at full speed, halting within a few feet of the edge of the cliff, leaped from the back of his horse and gazed over.

He saw nothing of the man, but the horse was struggling madly with the swiftly-flowing waters.

But the animal lasted only an instant, and was rolled under by the current out of sight, just as the outlaw arose and threw up his arms in a mad struggle for life.

Could Buffalo Bill have saved that man's life then he would have done so, for he felt all the horror that comes to the one who looks on helpless to aid, and see a fellow-being drown.

A moment passed and horse and rider had disappeared forever from sight.

There was no doubt of their death, for the torrent of waters rushed on, and though the scout turned his glass down the stream, they did not rise again.

For a moment Buffalo Bill stood in silence, his fine face saddened by what he had witnessed.

Then, with a sigh, he said to his horse:

"The end has come, Lucifer, and we ran the outlaw chief to his death."

Mounting again, Buffalo Bill started off, anxious to avoid any bands of the retreating Indians who might be in the vicinity.

It led a few hundred yards to a ravine, and here it was lost.

But some impulse caused the scout to ride down into the ravine, and the rocky surface left no trail.

He held on, supposing that the ravine would lead him out to the cliff trail again, and suddenly came to the river.

There he saw the trail of the outlaw's horse, as it came in view directly at the water's edge.

"Well, I did not know there was a break in the cliff banks along here that one could reach the river by.

"If the redskins crowd me, I can swim across, though I would not relish such an undertaking.

"But the outlaw rode into the river here, for it is shallow, and to have gained the cliff where I saw him, he must have come down the river, so I will go up."

With this, keeping close along under the high cliff banks, where there was a sand and gravel deposit, and the water was but a foot in depth, he held his way for several hundred yards.

Then he came to another chasm in the cliff, and he entered it, the rocky walls towering a hundred feet above his head, and the narrow passageway not five feet wide.

A stream, clear as glass, flowed down the chasm to the river, but here and there was the track of the outlaw's horse, so the scout held on.

At the mouth of the chasm where he had turned in, he saw up the river half a mile, landmarks that were familiar, revealing to him the upper ford.

After a ride of a quarter of a mile up the chasm, it suddenly spread out into a veritable bowl, for it was a couple of acres in size, surrounded by precipitous cliffs hundreds of feet high, and which a squirrel could not climb, the edges all fringed with pines.

But the bowl was like a garden of beauty, a bit of meadowland dotted with trees, with a deep, clear pool in it, into which from the cliff above fell a vail-like fall of water.

The scout halted his horse and looked long and earnestly about him.

Buffalo Bill, in his surprise, did not dismount from

his horse for full ten minutes, but stood gazing about him.

Then he saw what surprised him still more.

It was a shelter of pine boughs at the head of the dell, and by it were the remains of a campfire, the ashes still warm.

"Well!" exclaimed Buffalo Bill, in surprise, and he at once staked his horse out and began a further search of the place.

There was evidence of some one having spent several days there at least, as the ashes of the campfire revealed, and the spots fed over by a horse staked out.

Going again to the entrance to the little canyon, Buffalo Bill from there again made a detour on foot, but with the same result, to see that there was but one entrance and exit.

Returning to his horse, he mounted and rode down to the entrance to the canyon at the river.

There he saw traces of a horse having made a landing on the gravel bar above the mouth of the chasm.

The tracks were still there upon the upper edge of the bar, for there it ended, shelving off into deep water.

Going back down the stream, on the bar, the way he had come, Buffalo Bill took in the whole way carefully, and reaching the little ravine, went up it to where he had turned in.

From that point two trails were visible, that of the outlaw's horse going on down the bank, and his own coming to it.

"Why, this looks like the same trail, would be taken for your own tracks, Lucifer, showing apparently that you had come this far, turned and gone back again.

"This is lucky, for the Indians will see it, following my trail to the river, then here, back to the cliff and their keen eyes will soon read that the horse went over there.

"They will think I lost my head, backed you over good horse, and struck out afoot; but they are mistaken.

"Now, how on earth did the outlaw chief reach that place from above?

"He could do it but in one way, and that is in crossing the ford half a mile above, lose his footing and have his horse swept on down by the current to the bar.

"I hear the warcries of the redskins now, and the shots of the soldiers, so they must be coming on up the trail, either one side of the river or the other.

"I will take you back to that little valley, Lucifer, and then find out what is going on."

Back to the retreat the scout rode, and Lucifer was unsaddled and staked out to feed, and he seemed greatly to enjoy the chance to crop the green, juicy grass about him.

Then Buffalo Bill stripped off his lower clothing, and carrying them in his arms, waded along the bar back to the ravine, then up it to the cliff, and thence back to where he had turned off the outlaw chief's trail.

Dressing himself again, Buffalo Bill went forward cautiously to reconnoiter.

He dared not retrace his way down the trail he had come, until he knew the redskins were not there.

Going up the river, following the trail of the outlaw, his experienced eye told him that the rapid pace at which the horse had been kept had been slackened, and the scout went with greater caution.

Continuing on, he took in the situation between him and the river, and he was glad to see that there was no way of scaling the lofty cliffs and peaks, to get into a position from whence one could look down into the little valley where he had left Lucifer.

He did not believe that a human foot had ever trod that little retreat, until the outlaw had found it from having been swept down the river and accidentally hit upon it.

A careful reconnoiter showed that the hiding place where he had secured his horse was perfectly safe, as it could not be seen from any direction, unless one was close upon it.

He intended to take no chances of falling into the hands of the retreating Indians, who, he knew, would show him little mercy.

Finally, the shooting died away, and Buffalo Bill remained at his retreat all that night.

He had provisions with him in the saddle-bags on Lucifer, and he decided to spend the next few days exploring in that vicinity, as the country was new to him, and he made it a business to know every inch, if possible, of the wild country in which he gained his fame as a great scout.

CHAPTER XI.

CONCLUSION.

Late in the evening some days later the watchers at Fort Advance caught sight of a body of men marching toward the fort.

It proved to be the expedition led by Lieutenant Worth and Sergeant Fallon, in search of Buffalo Bill, and the whole fort crowded out to meet the newcomers.

Everybody there loved and admired the great scout.

And besides that, everybody knew that his loss would be a terrible blow to the army.

Once the Indians learned that the great Pa-e-has-ka, as they called Buffalo Bill, was dead, their depredations would break out afresh, for they feared the great scout more than they did a brigade of artillery or cavalry.

And so there were many anxious faces turned in the direction of the party approaching the fort.

When the force came nearer and Buffalo Bill's well-known form was not seen among the horsemen, a groan went up from the crowd that had assembled.

And then, when Lieutenant Worth told the story of their unsuccessful attempt to track the scout, every heart sank, for it was clear to every one that there was little hope now of the rescue of Buffalo Bill.

Just as that expedition was filing into the fort, a private soldier called out that there was another horseman approaching across the plain.

"And it's Buffalo Bill, too," yelled out a sergeant, who had known the scout for years.

"Either Bill or his ghost," cried Worth, and every eye was fixed upon the approaching figure.

Nearer and nearer came the horseman, and at last his face came into plain view in the rays of the setting sun.

It was Buffalo Bill, alive and well, and the ringing cheer that went up when he drew his horse to its haunches before the fort, shook the fort to its foundations. Buffalo Bill had eluded the Indians by swimming the river, instead of fording it, and was saved. That night was one to be remembered in Fort Advance, for a great dinner was held in honor of the scout's return, and he was forced to tell again and again the story of his run-down of the Red Hand Rider.

THE END.

Next week's issue, No. 66, will contain "Buffalo Bill's Red Trail; or, A Race for Ransom."

The adventures that followed upon the breaking up of the renegade band were among the most exciting of Buffalo Bill's career.

He found a pard who, although a white man, could go unharmed through a camp of hostile Indians, and with him the scout passed through an experience he will never forget.



THRILLING ADVENTURE



Hustle up, boys. The contest closes September 1st, remember, and it is not so many weeks until then. Look on page 31 for list of prizes and rules in the contest. It's never too late to enter.

A Railroad Thriller.

(By Claude Dickman, Ind.)

One day a boy named Bert and myself were taking my grandfather to his work. He was employed near the Illinois Central trestle, and I and my friend thought we would cross it on our way back.

We started across when we saw a train coming up the incline. We ran off the bridge and it went past. We started off again, not thinking about the extra.

When we were in the middle of the trestle I heard a rumbling noise behind me, and, turning, I was face to face with a big locomotive. I yelled at Bert to jump off. So we both jumped and swung around some way and caught the edge of the trestle, and hung there till twenty-two cars passed. If the engineer had rang his bell or blown a whistle I guess I would have jumped and drowned myself in the river below.

Breaking a Dog of Sucking Eggs.

(By Sam Stewart, Mo.)

This incident happened about four years ago this spring while living on a farm in southern Missouri. One evening my sister came to the house and said something had robbed one of the setting hens.

We were all very angry. My father declared it was the dog. Our dog was a Shepherd dog which we called Shep. I thought a good deal of old Shep, so I held out till the last that Shep didn't suck the eggs.

Finally one day my sister caught the dog breaking up another old setting hen. When she told father he went and caught old Shep and gave him a good thrashing. Then he said if the dog was caught sucking eggs again he would kill him (Shep). But I determined to break the dog of his bad habit, and thus save his life. A few days later my father went to town and left us all alone.

After he was gone I began making preparations for my new cure. I sent my sister after an egg and I went in the house to get some powder. But perhaps it would be better to tell what my cure was. My intentions were to put some powder into an egg for the dog, and when

he went to eat the egg I would set fire to the powder, and he would think the egg had exploded.

Well, I went and got the powder, which hung on the wall, and brought it out.

By this time my sister had returned with the egg. I then poured the powder all out. There was about half a pound in the horn, so the reader can easily see that I had too much powder. We placed the egg on top of the powder and then began to say, "Here, Shep! here, Shep!" In a few minutes the dog came running up to us, thinking we had something for him to eat. (But we didn't.)

When we saw him coming I went into the house and got some fire. Then we showed the egg to Shep. At the sight of it he started for it. I went to throw the fire into the powder, but I stumbled and fell, but I fell very near the egg and powder, so I just shoved my fire right into the powder. The powder exploded right in my face.

My hair and face were scorched and my eyes blown full of dirt. I yelled and Shep howled.

Shep didn't suck any more eggs. Neither did I fool with any more powder in that way.

A Narrow Escape.

(By R. A. McLean, Cal.)

Several years ago the railroad built a bridge over a good-sized river near a town in the northern part of this State. It used to be (and is yet) a favorite amusement of the town boys to go out to the river and walk over on this trestle. This was very dangerous, as the bridge was exceedingly narrow, having only one track, and there was quite a distance from shore to shore of the river. If a train should happen along unexpectedly it would have gone hard with any boys who happened to be on the structure. But none of them ever got caught by a train, and this bridge-walking grew to be quite an amusement.

While on a visit to some relatives in the spring, I decided, one evening, to walk the railroad bridge. I couldn't get any one to go with me, so I started out alone. I got about halfway over and was engaged in looking at the numerous eddies and whirlpools in the

rushing river (which is fed by snow water), when, to my horror I saw, coming around a bend in the track on the farther side an engine drawing several coaches and a baggage-car. This was the flyer. It scarcely slowed up at all when it struck the bridge, and I knew it was too late to run. I didn't want to risk a drop into the river, as I would probably be sucked under by a whirlpool. I had to make up my mind quickly, so I grasped the end of one of the ties which protruded out quite a way from the track and let myself hang down at full length, holding on tightly with both hands. Suddenly there was a frightful, rushing, roaring sound, right above me, and the train was upon me. I thought I hung on there for an hour, but in reality it was only a minute. The vibrations of the bridge nearly made me lose my hold, and I was dazed by the rush and roar of the train. But I had but one idea in my head—to hang on. At last the train passed and I succeeded in working myself up onto the bridge with a great deal of difficulty. I went home and didn't tell any one what had happened.

Out Boating.

(By John Killing, N. Y.)

Two years ago, in July, we spent the summer at Northport, Long Island.

My father and I went out in a sailboat. We went out on a Sunday morning. The weather was pleasant.

But in the afternoon a storm came. We were about in the middle of the Long Island Sound.

The waves upset our boat; then we had to see how we could get to shore, but we could not swim.

I saw a log float past me. I caught hold of it. I told my father to do so, too. Then we managed to get to shore.

When we came home we put on some dry clothes and my mother gave me a cup of hot coffee to warm me up again.

Only for that log we would have been drowned.

A Filipino Tale; or, Squeezed by a Boa Constrictor.

(By Donald Wilson, Texas.)

In the year 1899 I went with Company L, of the Fourth Infantry, in the transport *Grant*, to the Philippines. I was only a little past ten years at the time, and was taken along more as a mascot than anything else, though I made myself useful by running errands for the captain and lieutenants, waiting on the table, etc.

We were stationed at a little place near Caloocan Island of Luzon, when one day, having strayed off in the woods, I was captured by a Filipino soldier and carried to their general, who questioned me in regard to the number of American soldiers at Caloocan, and upon my refusal to give him any information he gave orders to hand me over to "Bomba," with the remark that probably "Bomba" would squeeze the information out of me.

"Bomba" proved to be an immense boa constrictor, twenty-five or thirty feet in length, and my fright knew no bounds when I was roughly shoved into the bamboo cage where he was confined. He immediately threw his folds around me, in the same manner as a Texas cowboy

ropes a steer, and I thought my time had come, but just as his folds were tightening around me a three-inch shell from the Monitor Monadnock in Manila Bay, cut his snakeship in halves and our boys made an attack, protected by a volley from Dewey's fleet, and rescued me from the hands of the enemy. I was still in the cage with the snake when our boys came up, and I was certainly happy when I heard the genuine Yankee cheer of victory.

I never see a boa constrictor or other snake without a thrill of horror, and I can never forget the time "Bomba" was in the act of squeezing the life out of me.

How it Feels to Be Run Over.

(By Emil Hoppe, Wis.)

On the 5th day of June a pard of mine, Harry Tuckwell, and myself were riding our bicycles. We started off about two o'clock to take a little ride. My brother loosened my handlebars without my knowing it. We started to ride away. We rode very fast around the corner, and when my wheel wouldn't turn I fell off.

There was a car almost five feet away from me.

The motorman began to holloa, but it was too late. The vehicle ran over my right leg. I told my pard that I wouldn't again ride a wheel with loose handlebars.

The Tiger of Lictou.

(By Ex-Corporal A. Wilson, Co. L, Fourth Infantry.)

About 4 a. m., one dark, dreary day during the rainy season, I was doing outpost duty on the road running from Novalita to Lictou, when I heard the sentry on No. 4, the outpost next to mine, yell, "Halt!" three times in succession and immediately fire his rifle. Then there went up one of the shrillest shrieks of agony I ever heard in which were blended extreme fright and agony. I heard the thud of a heavy fall, followed by a prolonged roar, which seemed to make the earth tremble. Having once before heard this roar while tiger hunting in India, I knew it came from that species of animal, and I hurriedly placed a sentry on post and went over to No. 4 as fast as I could run. Four men and corporal constituted the Cossack post which we were at that time using, and a corporal could either take a turn on post to relieve the men or not, as he chose, as non-commissioned officers were not supposed to do sentry duty, though I always walked post from about 3:30 or 4 a. m. till daylight, that invariably being the time that all night attacks were made.

Before I came up to Post No. 4 I heard yells and excited voices, and also heard a vicious crunch of bones, as the tiger chewed his helpless victim. At this sound I yelled to Corporal Lang, who was in charge of the post:

"For God's sake, Lang, fire on that tiger. He is killing Morgan!" I had recognized Morgan's voice long before I arrived on the scene. Both corporal and men seemed panic-stricken and powerless to use their weapons. Hastily fixing my bayonet as I ran I plunged it into the tiger's side the moment I caught a view of him in the dim light; the beast left Morgan and sprang on me. Fortunately for me, that morning I had thrown my blanket around my shoulders and tied in it, so it was

still on when the great beast sprang on me. I escaped with a few scratches, and the brute, tearing the blanket from me and becoming entangled in it, attacked it with the greatest fury. While he was thus engaged, one of the boys lit a lantern and threw its light in the beast's face.

It at once began to slowly retreat. My blood now being up and my wounds smarting from the tiger's claws, I attacked it with the greatest fury, while Morgan, with one hand and his gun held between his knees, cocked and placed the muzzle to the beast's ear and fired a 25-30 Krag bullet into its head, blowing the top of its head off. A few kicks and jerks and it was dead, while Morgan fainted from loss of blood. The beast measured thirteen feet from nose to tip of tail and weighed 645 pounds—the largest ever killed in the Philippines. Poor Morgan had to have his left arm amputated at the shoulder, and died nine days after the accident from blood poisoning.

We sent the pelt, after having same properly dressed by a native, to his father in his far-away Vermont home. In due time we received a long letter of hearty thanks for the trophy from his father, to whom we had written that the beast which bore the hide had fallen before the aim of his son. I trust I shall never have to repeat this experience either in the Philippines or elsewhere, but my advice to all my young friends is never to lose your self-command under any circumstances.

A Fearful Scare.

(By Wendell Cassidy, D. C.)

I was eleven years old when this thrilling adventure happened: It was on a Friday. I was having a singing lesson when all of a sudden I heard a rumbling of feet in the room over me. The teacher ran to the door to see what was the matter. I told her that I smelt smoke.

Then I heard some one cry, "Fire!"

I rushed from my seat, ran downstairs, picked a little first-grade boy up and ran out. I soon learned that the school was not on fire, but four sheds in the neighborhood. The bell rang for us to go to our room, but when we got there it was full of smoke.

The engines came and put the fire out.

An Adventure in the Abandoned U. S. Allegheny Arsenal.

(By Grant Lange, Pa.)

One evening last April, having finished my day's work by delivering some medicine to one of the soldiers in the arsenal, I stopped in the guardhouse.

Two of the guards, Hall and Brooks, by name, were on guard. Brooks said that he would make his rounds in the lower part, just as I came in. I asked him if I could go along, and he said, "Yes."

We reached the shops in the arsenal and tried all the doors. We then went down to the blacksmith shop and Brooks showed me where the copper had been torn off the eaves of the roof the night before by a person or persons unknown.

We walked farther back toward the wall when I heard a noise like the click of a pistol. All at once a man ran across the roof. I saw him and cried:

"Look, Brooks, there he goes."

Brooks pulled out his .45 army Colt, and sent a shot after the man. As soon as he shot five or six others came running over the roof.

Bang! bang! bang! rang three more shots on the night air. At the third shot one fellow let out a howl of pain and fell, but he was carried off by his companions. Brooks sent me after Sergeant Biter and when I got to his house I found that he had gone out. I hurried after him and caught up to him near Thirty-niner street. He came back with me, and when we got down to the shops we met Brooks carrying some of the copper into the gashouse. The next day they weighed it and found almost 300 pounds. About nine-tenths of it was torn off the roof. The thieves made their escape and have never come back after any more copper.

Under a Heavy Stone.

(By Geo. Archambault, Mass.)

At the time I write my story I am in bed getting over my adventure.

I am employed in a stoneyard. A little while ago the boss received a carload of stone on a Friday afternoon. We got ready to unload the stone. We tied a stone to the derrick which weighed twenty-seven hundred pounds.

When we were ready I signaled to the engineer to start hauling up the stone.

When the stone was about five feet up, one of the men gave way.

The engineer called to have me get out of the way, but I was too late. A piece of stone which had broken off the big stone came down on my head. When I came to my senses, I was lying in bed with a deep gash on my head. I was laid up nine days, after which I went back to work on a Monday morning the big stone had been cut in two pieces. I went to work on one of the pieces Friday noon at about ten minutes to twelve. I had my piece to finish. I didn't see anything else to do, so I turned around, always leaning on my stone. I took a match out of my pocket to light a cigar. I dropped my match. Just as I bent down to pick it up the stone came down on my back. Of course, I fell unconscious.

When I came to my senses the stone was on my leg, started to cry, but nobody seemed to hear me. The yard is in a deserted place where hardly ten persons go by in one day. I knew my leg was broken, and I had two fingers badly crushed. I had been working in that place about eight months, and I remembered seeing four brakemen going to dinner at about twenty minutes past twelve, so my only hope was to wait till they came along.

They did come along and took me from under the stone.

A Swimming Adventure.

(By W. R. Smith, Ia.)

This story which I am about to relate happened when I lived in Missouri, in the year 1900. One bright day early in August, I and several other boys had decided to go swimming. So we all got together, about three o'clock in the afternoon, and started for the swimming

e, which was about down the creek from where lived.

a There had been a gain since we were swimming before, and the creek was banked full. I was the first to into the water. We had waded around quite a while, on when suddenly I went down clear over my head. When howame to the top I told one of the boys, who was smaller than myself, and not a very good swimmer, not to go near the hole, for if he got in it he would drown. He tried he wouldn't. So I started to swim down to the inner end of the hole, where the other boys were. When I had gotten about half way there, I heard some one cry, "Help, help!"

Turning round, I saw that the boy had gotten into the hole. So I swam toward him with all my might. I reached him just as he was going down the third time. I made a lunge toward him and succeeded in getting him by the hair, and swam toward the shore with him. He was unconscious, when I reached the shore. So I rolled him around a little bit when he began to vomit. I never saw a boy so sick in all my life.

He was just beginning to gain consciousness, when the boys from the other end of the hole had come up to see what was the matter, when I told them what had happened.

So they all got out of the water and dressed, and as soon as the boy was able, we all started for home, having had enough swimming for that day. The boy thanked me a thousand times for saving his life, and he said he never would go in swimming again.

The Rescue.

(By S. Weiss, Col.)

There is a fifty-foot well under our house which has twenty-five feet of water in it.

One morning in the month of February, this year, I heard a queer sound coming from it, and on looking with a lantern on a string found that our dog Fred had fallen in. I at once started to rescue him.


I ran over to a painter's shop and got a rope and pulleys. I hooked it on a beam which was used to hold up a pipe which was over the well.

Then finding a piece of old red wood down in the cellar I put it on the other hook to sit on. I had two friends of mine to pull me up. I got to the dog just as the poor thing was going down for the last time. I then yelled for them to pull.

They did, until I got about half way out, when they gave out, and left me hanging. Then they started to pull again until I got hold of the rim of the well and gave the dog to my sister.

The dog was very nearly dead when I got it in the house, but he is all right now.

I got a cold from the water that got on me from the dog.

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